




OFFICE OF THE CHAIR
JOE A. MARTINEZ, CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DISTRICT 11

Memorandum

To: Honorable Vice-Chairman Dennis C. Moss and
Members of the Board of County Commissioners

From: Joe A. Martinez, Chairman 

Date: September 18, 2006

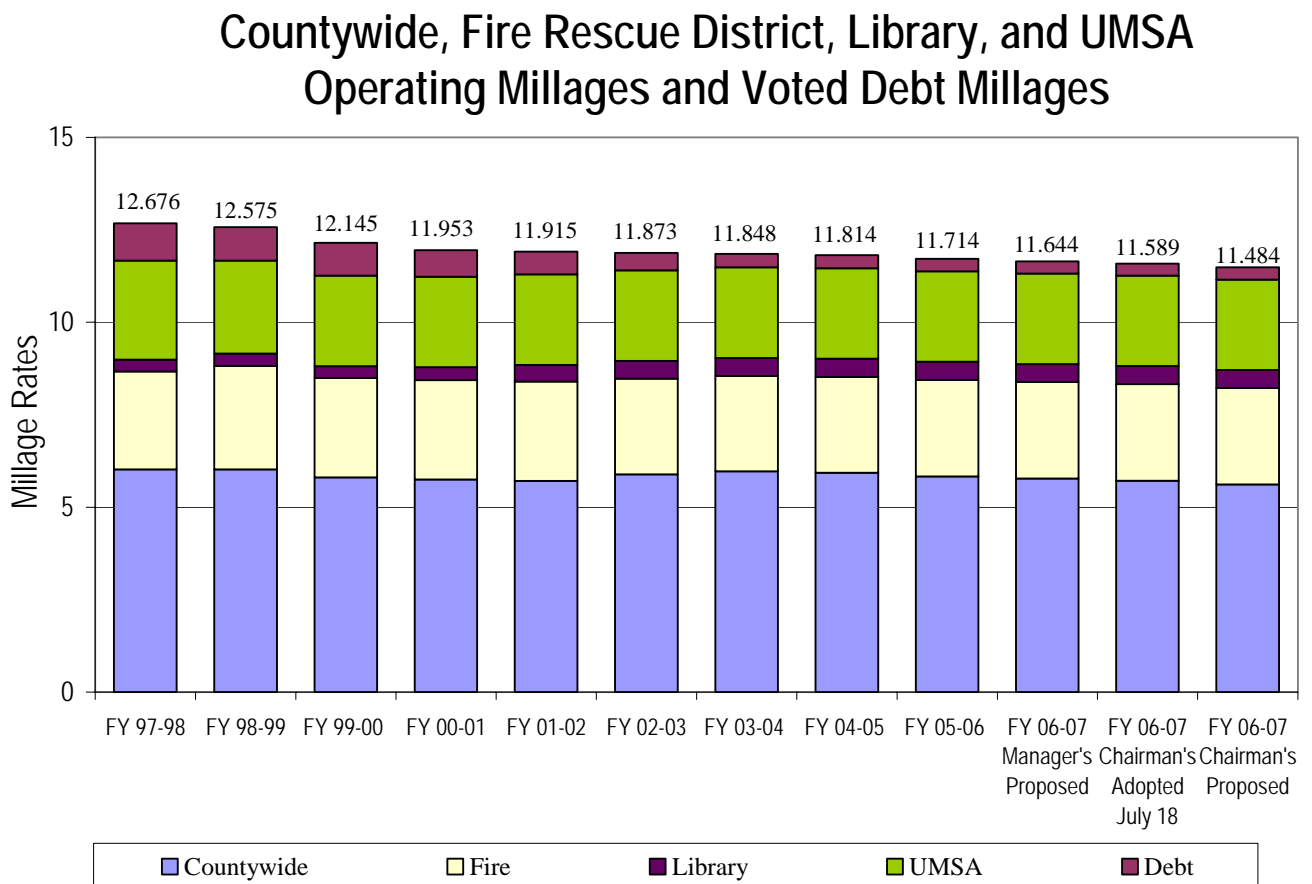
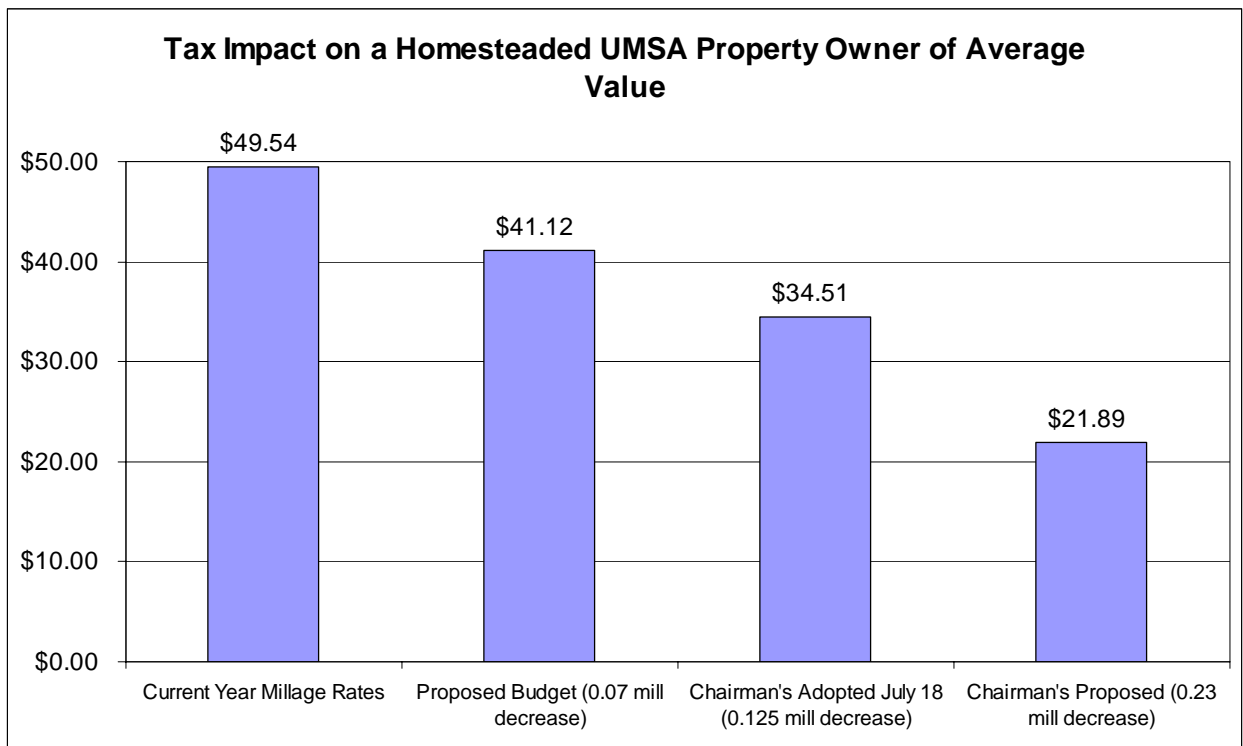
Re: Budget Message – Fiscal Year 2006-2007

I am taking the opportunity to respond to the latest adjustments outlined in the Manager's memorandum presented at the first budget hearing and put forward my recommendations and additional modifications. I am extremely pleased with the spirit of cooperation that continues to exist amongst all involved participants in this budget process including the Mayor, my fellow members of the Board of County Commissioners, the Commission Auditor, the County Manager's Office, County departments, and the public in general. It is clear that our well established line item review procedure under the umbrella of our Results Oriented Government has created a very efficient and above all transparent process. Once again, I would like to thank my colleagues for helping to provide budget preparation guidance through the Committee process and for advancing budget requests to the County Manager in anticipation of the budget hearings. For this, I want to congratulate all of you.

Although the Proposed FY 2006-07 Resource Allocation Plan as presented by the County Manager provides us with the fundamentals to deliver the tasks we have set ourselves to accomplish, followed by my approved proposal July 18th, I strongly believe that there is

still room for improvement while not compromising services, much needed programs, and the current affordable housing situation. If my message is adopted, concurrent with the Manager's recommendations I intend to achieve the following:

- Further provide additional combined tax rate reductions to our citizens. Specifically, a total reduction to the combined countywide millage rate of 0.230 mills, an additional reduction of .105 mills from my proposed June 30, 2006 message (contained .055 mill reduction) which was adopted by the Board on July 18th. While there has been growth in the County's Tax Rolls, this would still represent the lowest millage rate since FY 1983-84 and the most relief in any one fiscal year since FY 1999-2000. This millage reduction represents a 3.8 percent reduction from the current countywide millage rate, which allows the average homesteaded property owner to pay less than the current year in their countywide portion of their tax bills.
- Maintain the current UMSA millage of 2.447 while still implementing targeted improvements to the UMSA areas. It is important to note that we have been able to maintain this millage rate for the last eight years and yet not diminish the quality/level of services.
- In terms of tax savings to the UMSA homesteaded property owner of average value, this millage rate reduction will generate an additional \$12.62 in savings in addition to the \$6.61 reduction that I proposed July 18th and adopted by the Board for a total savings of \$19.23. Residents affected by our countywide millage outside the UMSA jurisdiction will also experience similar savings of \$19.23. The chart on page 3 summarizes the tax impact to the average UMSA homeowner for the various millage scenarios which have been presented to the Board.
- Provide general fund support for a tenant based housing subsidy program in order to address the current housing situation and get immediate assistance to those affected and upon adoption of the budget. I am directing the Manager to expeditiously implement the tenant based housing subsidy program.
- Urge the Manager to carefully explore other sources of funding such as the State Housing Initiative Partnership Program (SHIP), the Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME), and additional State and Federal Surtax revenues that may have additional funds available to augment the \$15 million that was earmarked by the Manager to immediately address the housing needs.
- Urge my colleagues to work with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (USHUD) in order to expeditiously request financial assistance for the refurbishment of existing affordable housing units in order to immediately provide assistance to those that have been displaced.
- Strengthening the Fire Rescue District and Library system operational reserves, while accelerating capital and operating plans.



As you read this message, I have detailed numerous priorities that have been highlighted throughout our budget process and how this proposal addresses issues that are important to our residents.

1. Fiscal Responsibility

As I stated in my February Budget Message, the County's continued focus on fiscal responsibility is of the utmost importance. We need to continue to improve this organization's financial stability and ensure that our general fund reserve balances are improved. The Emergency Contingency Reserves established in the Countywide and UMSA General Fund as well as in the Fire Rescue District are crucial for improving the County's fiscal fitness. It is important that as we continue to have incredible growth in our tax rolls that is clearly not sustainable, we continue to strengthen our reserves, especially given recent increased storm activity.

While most of our storm-related expenditures are reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the crucial services this government provides to its residents after a storm must never be in jeopardy, they are too important.

I commend the Manager for his prudent approach in the allocation of the available resources. We must discourage enhancements that require recurring commitments without assessing the long-term fiscal implications. Extraordinary tax roll performance will eventually stop and the delivery of services may have to be adjusted to the new tax base. We must instill austerity and efficiency in our expenditure habits. To this end, and continuing the initiatives brought upon by our Results Oriented Government priorities, I am recommending that proper legislation be brought to the Board through the Government Structure Task Force to create a similar institution to the former Efficiency and Competition Commission that was created by former Mayor Alex Penelas. I look forward to the creation of an entity with similar priorities. I understand that the Task Force will be meeting this afternoon to address this issue as well as many other pertinent issues under the leadership of Vice Chairman Moss.

The additional millage reduction I recommended in my response to the FY 2006-07 Proposed Budget was approved by the Board on July 18th and provides further tax relief to our citizens and still allows for further strengthening of our resources. The additional millage reduction proposed in this message for adoption on September 20, 2006 is fiscally prudent and provides adequate funding needed for housing, public safety, public works, and other very important enhancements while still strengthening our reserves. I ask that the Manager detail the necessary adjustments prior to the second budget hearing.

The table on page 5 summarizes the different millage rates that have been presented to the Board including actual FY 2005-06 millages, FY 2006-07 millages incorporated as part of the proposed budget originally released by the Manager on May 31, 2006, the millage I sponsored and the Board approved on July 18, 2006, and finally, the FY 2006-07 millage rates I am proposing as part of this budget message.

MILLAGE TABLE				
Taxing Unit	FY 2005-06 Actual Millage	FY 2006-07 Proposed Millage Rates in Book	FY 2006-07 Chairman's Adopted July 18	FY 2006-07 Chairman's Proposed Millage Rates
Countywide Operating	5.835	5.775	5.720	5.615
Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Service District	2.609	2.609	2.609	2.609
Miami-Dade Public Library System	0.486	0.486	0.486	0.486
Total Millage Subject to 10 Mill Cap	8.930	8.870	8.815	8.710
Unincorporated Municipal Service Area (UMSA)	2.447	2.447	2.447	2.447
Sum of Operating Millages	11.377	11.317	11.262	11.157
Voted Millages -- Debt Service				
Countywide	0.285	0.285	0.285	0.285
Fire Rescue District Special Obligation Bond	0.052	0.042	0.042	0.042
Sum of Operating and Debt Millages	11.714	11.644	11.589	11.484

2. Ethics in Government

Since being appointed Chairman of the Commission in 2004, I have been dedicated to ensuring that all levels of county government are open, fair, and accountable to the public. In order to maintain these high standards and uphold the community's faith in our county government, the Board passed several ethics resolutions strengthening our policy in maintaining integrity in our system of government.

On February 1, 2005, the Board adopted Resolution R-189-05 requiring all individuals serving on a County board to complete an Ethics Training Course administered by the Commission on Ethics and Public Trust to include such topics as the Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics ordinance, the Sunshine Law, and the Public Records Law. To date the Commission on Ethics has trained almost 900 board members out of 1,600. In October 2005, the Board approved R-1154-05 adopting Administrative Order 7-42 "Ethics Awareness Programs" which requires all newly hired County employees to participate in ethics awareness training within 30-days of employment and that all existing employees participate in ethics awareness training no less than every five years.

By May 2007, every County employee will have completed the most recent ethics training program. However, making sure our employees and board members understand what it is to be ethical and to make ethical decisions is not enough. To this end, the Board on July 8, 2003, passed R 769-03 requiring all County employees who are involved in procurement, contracting, and purchasing for Miami-Dade County to take a mandatory yearly ethics training course. Furthermore, in continuing my commitment for a strong and ethical government, I have sponsored several ethics ordinances to be heard by the Board in the upcoming weeks stemming from increasing the fines the Ethics Commission can impose against violators, to expediting the hearing process for complaints filed under the Ethical Campaign Practices ordinance, to requiring the Ethics Commission to make findings of intentional or unintentional misconduct against the parties charged with ethic violations. Ethics in government begins with each of us and I will continue to move forward and strive for stronger accountability in all that we do and all that is touched by County government.

As part of the County's continued support in strengthening the integrity of our system, the Elections Department conducts audits of all campaign treasurers' quarterly reports. These audits include reviewing campaign running totals for accuracy, ensuring that campaign revenues match expenditures, and that campaign contributions and expenditures are properly recorded.

The Elections Department conducts these audits for, among others, commission, mayoral, judicial, school board, and community council candidate campaigns, as well as for political action committees (PACS). For County Commission and Mayoral candidates that wish to qualify for the Campaign Financing Trust Fund (CFTF) funding, the Elections Department helps determine candidate eligibility by verifying that each candidate's contribution list is comprised of the proper number of valid contributors and allowable contributions. In addition, the Elections Department determines that those candidates that do qualify for CFTF funding submit an additional report containing sufficient information for the audit of the campaign contributions and expenditures. I am very encouraged that we continue to support and fund these initiatives; our residents deserve our full commitment to ethical behavior and education.

3. Solid Waste

As noted, I have responded to the concerns surrounding the extraordinary tax roll growth by recommending a further adjustment to the countywide millage rate. The FY 2006-07 Proposed Budget included a \$50 increase in the Solid Waste fee for residential collection service, which includes a proportional fee adjustment to all other collection fees.

Given all of the issues requiring decisions by the Board, I am directing the County Manager to advise the Board as to the impact, particularly in terms of recommended enhancements to bulky waste collection, of a \$10 or 20 percent reduction in these proposed collection fees. Furthermore, I have conveyed my concerns with the Manager's proposed fee increase and have indicated that I would not be supportive of any amount that exceeds \$40 yet if we can accomplish our service requirements as well as necessary enhancements with an amount less than \$40, I would not only support it but also encourage it.

I would like to thank Commissioner Seijas, Chairperson of the Infrastructure and Land Use Committee (INLUC) for her leadership and continued oversight of the Solid waste service delivery issues.

4. Accountability

Since its inception, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) has identified over \$45 million dollars of questionable costs working closely with the County administration. In FY 2004-05 alone, over \$26 million in questionable costs, identified losses and damages, and lost revenues were identified, and over \$16 million dollars in restitution and savings were achieved as a result of OIG investigations and audits. OIG investigations have also directly led to 156 arrests since 1999, including the arrest of 19 individuals and the indictment of two companies in FY 2004-5. Those criminally charged were accused of various crimes, including grand theft, official misconduct, and solicitation to commit perjury, forgery mortgage fraud, racketeering, unlawful compensation, and income tax evasion.

The County's continued commitment to uncover fraud and waste has resulted in substantial recoveries and savings for the County, including numerous arrests of wrongdoers. Recently, an investigation of the airport's Fuel Farm, targeting theft and corruption led to the arrests of twenty-three individuals and indictments of various companies. Corrective actions have now been implemented at the airport to avert future fuel thefts and, consequently, the airport is recovering millions in restitutions and unrealized revenues. The County's continued efforts in uncovering abuses and mismanagement can also be seen at the PHT in various significant programs where the County has helped the PHT recover millions in restitution and savings, which provided the catalyst for the implementation of historical reforms by the PHT in the procurement arena, resulting in meaningful transparency, accountability, and efficiency.

"Operation Get the Lead Out" was another investigation/audit that helped the county recover millions in lost revenues as it targeted corrupt county employees and vendors who fraudulently disposed of tires by circumventing county waste disposal scales. I am pleased to say the tire waste disposal system has been reformed because of this case.

With the County's aggressive efforts, many other cases/audits can be cited which have had a positive impact on county operations, i.e. water tampering, tuition refund, residential property thefts, transit bus warranty audit, alterations of county-issued tax certificates for auction, and various departmental overtime audits. In addition to the County's quest for accountability in government and restoring the public's faith in our system, the County continues its oversight presence at the Airport, Water and Sewer, Seaport, PHT, Solid Waste Management, Transit, and the Performing Arts Center. It is the result of this oversight that has yielded important studies and reports which has netted the county millions in savings and recoveries and/or the implementation of stringent oversight programs including the Seaport's Capital Improvement Plan, Miami International Airport (MIA) North Terminal, elections and campaign financing, and bond engineering programs. The crisis in the County's housing program as reported in a recent series of Miami Herald articles has resulted in investigations in five major areas.

I am pleased with the progress made by the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department (MDFR) concerning off-duty services. While MDFR will continue to provide stand-by rescue services at large scale public events such as Dolphin football games, the County will only provide code deficiency related fire watch services until a private fire watch is procured or the deficiency is remedied, whichever occurs first. The department has also taken steps to enhance the payroll process. MDFR and ETSD have implemented a payroll interface to cross check employee social security numbers, dates worked, hour worked and other information eliminating the potential for duplicate payments. MDFR has also implemented a formal policy limiting the number of consecutive hours worked by on duty uniform personnel, limiting off-duty hours before and after a regular 24 hour shift, and limiting consecutive off-duty assignments.

I commend the Manager for his continued support of departmental oversight of GOB contracts and procurement activities through the funding of two FY 2005-06 overage positions in the OIG.

I am also pleased to see that the Manager is proposing the addition of four positions in the Department of Audit and Management Services and two positions in the Office of Strategic Business Management to enhance our audit and performance assessment and improvement functions.

5. Homeland Security

My proposal to establish a Regional Homeland Security Center within the surplus property located adjacent to the Homestead Air Reserve Base commenced approximately four years ago when the County began negotiating with the Federal government for the transfer of the property. As a result, we were able to identify a 120-acre of the property that lies adjacent to the airfield as the area where this development should occur. Our reasons for pursuing this type of development included the creation of jobs in a manner that would not encroach on the viability of the current operation of Homestead Air Reserve Base and the fact that the Department of Homeland Security has discussed the idea of creating regional centers for Homeland Security activities. Our transfer agreements with the Federal government allow for the transfer of property to the Federal government for Homeland Security and/or military purposes at no cost to the Federal government.

The United States Coast Guard approached Miami-Dade County when it was looking for a location for a new unit, Maritime Safety and Security Team (MSST) Miami. We were able to attract this operation to the surplus property due to the nominal cost of the land, the availability of a building and the proximity of services provided by Homestead Air Reserve Base. MSST Miami currently operates at a 21-acre portion of the surplus property of the former Homestead Air Reserve Base (HARB). The land was leased to the Coast Guard by the Board of County Commissioners at no cost and the Coast Guard renovated the structure to serve as the headquarters of the unit. This new unit has approximately 150 personnel, many of whom live in the South Miami-Dade area. Given our long-term plan to attract Department of Human Services (DHS) facilities to the site, we felt that having the Coast Guard on site was a good first step.

The FEMA component has been on site for 3 hurricane seasons. FEMA leases the 100,000 square foot hangar for purposes of storing materials that are distributed to the public in the event of a disaster. Last year, this facility mobilized during Katrina and Wilma and proved to be a good operational site for FEMA due to the proximity to the active airfield operated by HARB, the proximity to the turnpike and US-1, and the availability of substantial vacant property that allowed for staging of the trucks.

Based on conversations that we have held over time with DHS, FEMA and congressional staff, we were able to convince the current FEMA administration that a permanent facility for this site should be explored. FEMA has decided to move forward with a feasibility study of the facility and the surrounding property and the first meeting with their contractor took place on September 13th.

Our overall goal for this property is to maximize the military and homeland security potential of the site and to provide a site for County institutional units that have either outgrown their current facilities or whose current locations are no longer appropriate.

As a result of recent reports pertaining to inbound flights to the U.S. and the terrorist plot towards our homeland, we need to assure that our citizenry is safe. I would like to continue to encourage all passengers to be patient with noted precautions so we can ensure that terrorists are not successful at altering our freedom or the ability of our citizens to execute desired activities. I would like Miami International Airport to continue implementing measures to assure the safety of our residents and traveling passengers.

I want to encourage the administration to continue researching for alternate federal funding sources, to mitigate County spending toward heightened security alerts and to the extent possible assess the feasibility of sustaining a countywide reserve to fund their unbudgeted demands.

6. Hurricane Preparedness

I am pleased that the transfer of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) to the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department (MDFR) has provided the necessary support and coordination to enable the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to function at an optimal level. The OEM is operating under the functional configuration that is used for the Incident Command System (ICS) and is compliant with the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The OEM functional branches, public safety, preparedness, human services, municipal, and logistics, are each under an Emergency Management Branch Manager who has specific responsibilities for activities within that branch. OEM preparedness is at an all time high with three levels of activation coinciding with federal standards.

The FY 2006-07 Proposed Budget includes a modified OEM table of organization to reflect the two new assistant director positions, one from MDFR and one from MDPD. An OEM Public Information Officer position was also added to enhance communication.

Pay grades for Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) positions were adjusted to increase retention and improve recruitment. Administrative support for OEM is being provided by MDFR and grant management responsibilities have also been transferred to the MDFR. All of these changes improve the county's ability to prepare and respond to incidents of all types.

The FY 2006-07 Proposed Budget includes \$150,000 for emergency activation needs. These funds are available for mattresses and blankets for shelters and other useful items for preparedness and response. I am pleased that this allocation for unanticipated emergency needs has been made. I urge the County Manager to continue evaluating the personnel and equipment needs of the OEM in light of the continuing challenges in emergency management and to allocate additional funds where warranted. I am also aware that the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program has exhausted its available funding and I recommend that the County be prepared to provide additional funds for more CERT training if needed.

Finally, I congratulate the County Manager on the coordinated response to the most recent severe weather threat. When public agencies, the media and elected officials work together, all Miami-Dade County residents benefit. I expect emergency preparedness and response capability to continue to improve when the EOC is relocated to the new location in West Dade at the "Lightspeed" building. To this end, I want to commend Commissioner Diaz for his unrelenting focus of the County's Hurricane Preparedness activities.

I am also pleased that the Manager has made strides in readying our public infrastructure for potential future storms. In particular, I am pleased that the County has purchased the Category 5-rated "Lightspeed" Building to house critical technology infrastructure. I encourage the Manager to make this facility operational as soon as possible, preferably before the next hurricane season begins. As well, I commend the fact that we will be upgrading the remaining traffic signals to mast arms instead of span wire installations to improve each signal's chance of remaining in operation after each storm. I am pleased that the Public Works Department has been working with Federal and State partners to make this happen. I also encourage other departments to seek out similar funding sources just as the General Services Administration, the Elections Department, and the Libraries have done to strengthen their facilities.

The County continues to provide home repairs and rehabilitation to low-income clients, including improvements resulting in energy conservation and to prevent and mitigate hurricane damage. In FY 2006-07, over 400 clients will benefit from these programs.

In FY 2002-03, the Community Action Agency started a hurricane shutter installation program for low-income elderly and disabled clients. To date, the County has installed approximately 1,400 shutters and funding is available to install approximately 200 more. The County has provided \$400,000 to date and \$100,000 is proposed for FY 2006-07 for a total of \$500,000. Funding is also provided by FEMA and the State of Florida Residential Construction Program. Additionally, a total of \$250,000 has been allocated since FY 2004-05 for the installation of 70 solar heaters.

7. General Obligation Bond Program

Considerable progress has been made on the first \$263 million in Series "A" bonds sold in July 2005 related to the Building Better Communities (BBC) General Obligation Bond (GOB) Program. Work has begun on 138 BBC projects and 357 are expected to begin in our second year. The Citizens' Advisory Committee has been an effective partner. Currently, more than \$175 million has been committed to projects in various stages of development including \$65 million through 107 municipal agreements which are either executed or in the process of being executed, \$42 million for County acquisition of property, \$19 million in design contracts such as the new Animal Shelter, Jackson South Community Hospital renovations, and Krome Avenue Detention Center, the Pre-Trial Detention Center, South-Dade Greenways and Trails, water and sewer enhancements and improvements at various parks, \$30 million in County construction contracts and \$3 million in not-for-profit grants. To date, the \$42 million in properties acquired include 977 acres totaling \$7 million for the Environmentally Endangered Land (EEL) program, the Miami Beach Community Health Center, land to expand Jackson South Hospital and the "Lightspeed" building, which will provide critical services during hurricanes.

Currently, 352 (91%) of the 385 BBC projects being managed by County departments are on schedule. A solicitation request (RFP) for non-profit organizations wishing to apply for capital improvement grant funds was advertised on July 28, 2006. Proposals are due by September 29, 2006 and award recommendations for fund disbursement will be presented to the BBC by the end of the year. In January 2006, the first Primary Health Care project costing approximately \$7 million was completed. A total balance of approximately \$18 million is available for future health care projects. Regarding the Historic Preservation Fund, a selection process will be presented to the BCC for approval before the end of the calendar year. Regarding the Economic Development Fund, opportunities to implement public infrastructure improvements will be evaluated and the Manager will periodically be submitting recommendations to the BCC for approval.

I am pleased to see that the FY 2006-07 Proposed Budget includes eight additional positions in the General Services Department (GSA) to help manage the construction of 37 scheduled BCC projects over the next 15 years.

8. People's Transportation Plan

Similar to the BBC, the People's Transportation Plan (PTP) continues to be a massive undertaking affecting operational as well as rail and roadway capital infrastructure projects. During FY 2005-06 the 2.6-mile extension from Earlington Heights Metrorail station to Miami International Airport reached final design and is expected to open in just under 4 years. The County's new Advancement Traffic Management System (ATMS) is primarily funded from the PTP and within the next several years, high-tech ATMS operations will be centrally housed at the recently purchased "Lightspeed" building. The Miami-Dade Transit Metrobus fleet has grown to 1,008 buses with an added 11 million annual miles of improved bus services and 23 new bus routes. Given the responsibility entrusted by our citizens to effectively use the PTP funding to deliver these infrastructure projects, MDT will now pause to adjust these new service miles and routes to efficiency standards to ensure that the system operates within available resources, and resources are available to build the remainder of the Orange Line as promised. Through Commissioner Gimenez's direction as Chairman of the Regional Transportation Committee, I am confident that the county's transportation efforts will continue to move forward as we further implement the PTP projects.

Miami-Dade Transit is working diligently with the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA) to develop commuter rail alternatives along the CSX and FEC railroad tracks to South West Dade. I continue to urge County staff through the Regional Transportation Committee to continue working with SFRTA to ensure that this project becomes a reality in our community.

9. Environment

We must continue our efforts to restore the tree canopy lost during last year's storm season. I commend the Manager for providing an additional \$4 million in resources to Public Works and the Park and Recreation departments for tree replacement. Through the coordination efforts of the CIAB the County will be able to successfully replace tree canopies to pre-Hurricane Katrina levels along street right-of-ways and parks, in addition to the green infrastructure projects currently taking place along the County's gateways. Furthermore, I would urge the Manager to create a pilot program to address litter in and around bus stops within the UMSA areas so that we could effectively maintain our County clean and free of litter.

The environment is not just an important issue countywide but also nationally and I wish to convey my sincere appreciation to Commissioner Sorenson for her strong determination in making this community a place where we all coexist with our environment, a place where our children and grandchildren can grow up and appreciate nature. In addition, I want to thank Commissioner Moss for his hard work and guidance as the Chairman of the CIAB for ensuring the county's implementation of the green infrastructure plan making Miami-Dade County a beautiful place to live and visit.

The Water and Sewer Department (WASD) Showerhead Program continues to be a success by exchanging over 5,688 high-efficiency models for older less efficient models. The department joins with the Department of Environmental Resources Management to attend Adopt-A-Tree events to exchange over 300 showerheads at all Adopt-A-Tree events combined. The department has attended various Earth Day celebrations, Team Metro Citizens Academy, Community Fairs and Expos and has begun to partner with Volunteers for America to ensure the placement of high-efficiency showerheads in the living quarters of our elderly. On September 1st, WASD joined with Volunteers of America in the Hialeah area and distributed additional showerheads impacting 300 residences. I would encourage the Manager to work on water conservation programs to decrease additional strains placed on our water resources.

Incidents of Illegal Dumping and the existence of Illegal Dumping sites continue throughout Miami-Dade County. In both remote areas of the County as well as in the Waste Collection Service Area, illegal dumping activity comes to the attention of the Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD) and Department of Solid Waste Management (DSWM).

I am pleased to see that the MDPD is addressing the issue of illegal dumping by educating the public through the news media and door to door conduct with individuals in areas where high amounts of illegal dumping is occurring. It is imperative that appropriate funding is allocated to the MDPD for additional illegal dumping enforcement. As a result, clean up efforts and arrests have increased. The DSWM budget assumes approximately \$360,000 for the removal of illegally dumped waste that cannot be charged to a violator. Funding continues to be provided under the current recommended fee structure in DSWM. Due to the impact of recent storms, I would encourage the County Manager to reassess the funding level as it may increase to previous pre-hurricane conditions.

10. Public Safety

I am encouraged at the spirit of cooperation that currently exists between the Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD) and the Corrections Department (MDCR). Currently, MDPD and MDCR staff exchanges ideas and resources including the planning for joint training classes, design of a correctional officer/field training officer program, and the referral of applicants to apply across divisions. The FY 2006-07 Proposed Budget for MDPD includes \$525,000 for a pilot Inmate Transportation program to increase the number of MDPD officers patrolling neighborhoods in lieu of transporting arresting individuals to jails. Finally, the Office of the Commission Auditor has begun the process of conducting a review of specific areas of MDCR and MDPD to include hiring and training functions.

I am pleased to see that the FY 2006-07 Proposed Budget includes an additional \$500,000 in overtime to expand the highly successful EEI program. The FY 2006-07 Proposed Budget also includes two additional basic law enforcement classes, addressing issues regarding vacancy rates and the impact of incorporations, and two classes of public service aides (PSAs), to increase police officer availability as PSAs can handle traffic accidents, traffic details, burglaries, auto theft, and larceny crimes. Miami-Dade Police Department continues to focus on innovative strategies as well as traditional responses to address crime fighting efforts. These efforts are based on in-depth statistical review process of criminal data to identify emerging crime trends and provide proactive remediation through Enhanced Enforcement Initiatives (EEI). A number of these efforts focus on juvenile related criminal activity and include monthly enforcement sweeps with divisional resources, sweeps in the Northside District, burglary/gang enforcement squads, and curfew sweeps. I encourage and support funding for MDPD to increase initiatives addressing juvenile crimes to ensure the safety of our children and residents. Also, in the FY 2006-07 Proposed Budget is most needed appropriation of \$350,000 to proceed with the construction of the Training Bureau facility. When finished, this building will be able to accommodate up to seven classrooms and bathroom facilities. However, I am still concerned that funding was not originally identified for a much needed armored vehicle for the Special Response Team. In order to assure that this priority is met, I am hereby requesting that the necessary funding for this priority be allocated upon approval of the FY 2006-07 Budget.

Additionally, as it pertains to the security of our employees and different County assets, I am concerned about how we provide security for all county facilities and in particular at the Stephen P. Clark Center (SPCC).

Governments throughout the country are tightening security at their facilities to deter criminal activity. The SPCC is an important nerve-center of Miami-Dade County Government and as such we should take all the necessary actions to protect it. I have worked with the Manager to ensure that security arrangements at our facilities maximize available funds and continue to provide the existing level of security here at the SPCC.

11. Corrections and Rehabilitation Department

The County Manager is recommending implementation of the Corrections and Rehabilitation Department's Three Year Priority Funding Plan that identifies critical needs such as the reinstatement of security posts; mandatory classroom based, supervisory and transitional lateral training classes, additional automation and equipment and an inmate uniform and bedding linen accountability system to assist with contraband detection and officer safety. Funding for Year One of the Three Year Plan is included within the FY 2006-07 Proposed Resource Allocation Plan. Additionally, some of the findings and recommendations in the Corrections and Rehabilitation Department's Final Management Report will be used as a roadmap to develop plans of action that improve security and accountability. The County Manager has initiated a national search for a Department Director which may result in future changes to the Department's table of organization. To this end, I am directing the Manager to commence a top bottom review of all departmental Tables of Organization within the County so that we could include them in our budgetary reviews for FY 2007-08 and further streamline our organization at the executive and support levels and in turn enhance services. This directive is in addition to the current position analysis being prepared by the Manager's office.

The FY 2006-07 Proposed Budget provides funds for staffing sixty-seven new and reinstated security positions through overtime, with recommendations to phase in additional posts over three years. This includes positions for shakedown teams, contraband detection, monitoring inmate phone calls and enhancing security at facilities. Funding is also included for a pilot Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) system at the Women's Detention Center. This will provide for real-time monitoring of inmate, staff, and visitor movement within the facility during the pilot program, with the potential in the future to monitor activity within and between all facilities as well as movement of assets. The FY 2006-07 Proposed Budget also funds a video visitation pilot project which, if fully implemented, would minimize the number of visitors within correctional facilities. Additionally, funding is included to fund continuation of the department's new inmate uniform, linen, personal item storage, and mattress policies.

Capital needs in the Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department are urgent due to deferred improvements to the aging infrastructure and deterioration of facilities, as well as security needs and crowding issues.

The general condition of the seven correctional facilities requires them to constantly be patched and repaired. The depreciation and deterioration of various building systems and components such as plumbing, electrical, HVAC and exterior and interior walls need ongoing maintenance, and it is a constant challenge to keep up with repairs within structures that are fully occupied by staff and inmates.

The voter approved Building Better Communities bond funding of two major projects for \$137 million within the Capital Budget will help address facility issues at the Pre-Trial Detention Center and provide funds for construction of additional jail space. The Department is currently working with the General Services Administration, the Office of Strategic Business Management, and the Office of Capital Improvements to further refine these plans. Additional capital needs are addressed in the Proposed Resource Allocation Plan and Multi-Year Capital Plan with funding for FY 2006-07 of \$7.480 million from the Capital Outlay Reserve (COR). Projects recommended for funding include upgrading the security system at the Metro-West Detention Center, fence and razor wire replacement at the Training and Treatment Center, smoke evacuation system refurbishment at the Metro-West Detention Center, replacement of obsolete computer, radio and communication equipment, replacement of a portion of the food retherm units, and refurbishment of freezers and coolers. On the operating side, the Proposed Resource Allocation Plan includes twenty-four additional maintenance staff to help address necessary repairs and improvements and respond to emergencies across all three shifts, along with necessary supplies and funding for rental of additional warehouse space. I want to encourage the Manager to continue the aggressive implementation of initiatives to better position the Corrections Department in its delivery of services.

12. Healthcare

The success of the 2nd annual Health, Safety and Hurricane Readiness Expo I sponsored was attended by over 2,000 people on June 3, 2006 at the Miami-Dade County Fair and Expo Center highlights how important health issues have become to our community. The fair benefited attendees, many whom lack health insurance, free health tests and a wealth of information on hurricane safety. I would ask that \$20,000 be allocated for this annual countywide event as it benefits the entire community and serviced over two thousand residents this past summer.

The provision of adequate healthcare for our employees and residents will continue to be one of my top priorities. Created on September 7, 2005, the BCC Healthcare Taskforce continues to be instrumental in creating meaningful dialogue between the County, healthcare professionals, and the business community.

The Task Force is compiling and analyzing the successful strategies that, if implemented within the County will help provide insurance-like coverage to uninsured County residents; will assist residents in attaining a "medical home," primary source of medical services that meet their needs for preventative health, medications, hospital and specialty care; and identify ways to help residents manage and improve their health quality and well-being. We should continue to be proactive in recommending viable and sustainable solutions in those particular focus areas for our residents. I want to extend a special thanks to Commissioner Sosa, Chairperson of the Community Outreach, Safety, and Healthcare Committee (COSHA) for her diligence in the community's healthcare issues.

In addition to working directly with the Healthcare Task Force, I commend the Manager for implementing the Primary Care Component of the Building Better Communities Bond Program. The County will develop a comprehensive planning process that will analyze health services utilization patterns among County residents, assess the primary care delivery system infrastructure and identify gaps in that system. I am very pleased that the end result will yield models for community planning and a comprehensive primary care center that can be replicated elsewhere in the County. Furthermore, the addition of a global imaging system (GIS) on our web portal that enables community members and community health planners to view key health information in their own neighborhoods through an interactive, web-based set of data maps will ensure the County is playing its part in generating strategies that can lead to significant improvements in health of Miami-Dade County residents.

The Public Health Trust (PHT) has implemented several initiatives to enhance revenues, improve efficiency, implement better financial controls and reduce costs totaling approximately \$120 million to date with additional initiatives for FY 2006-07 of approximately \$50 million. These initiatives include consultant recommendations through Project ReCreate as well as management actions.

Since FY 2003-04, when the PHT experienced an operating deficit of \$85 million, the County and PHT have worked to improve the fiscal viability of the PHT. With County support and their own aggressive initiatives, the PHT has been able to eliminate operational deficits. The County has issued and assumed the debt service for \$85 million for equipment purchases and facility improvements. The Proposed Budget for FY2006-07 includes an additional \$45 million in debt for which the PHT will start making payments in FY2007-08. The FY 2006-07 Proposed Budget includes \$11.52 million in countywide funds towards debt service obligations assumed by the County on behalf of the PHT.

In addition \$7.455 million in discretionary funds has also been incorporated, beyond the required maintenance of effort (MOE). The County has also included the PHT in its property insurance coverage resulting in recurring annual savings of approximately \$1.5 million; assumed liability for deductibles totaling \$25 million freeing up funding for ongoing operations; and has staggered various payments due to the County including payments for insurance, and Medicaid reimbursements to assist with cash flow.

PHT management and staff from the County Manager's Office and from the Office of Strategic Business Management continue working together cooperatively to alleviate the fiscal difficulties of the PHT which are mostly due to the high cost of providing medical services to the County's indigent and uninsured population. Pursuant to Resolution 461-06, a three to five year financial plan will be presented to the Board this fall. I would like to commend Commissioners Sosa, Souto, and Rolle for their commitment to the PHT as Board representatives in the best interest of those we serve.

The Board will also be presented with the recommendations developed by the Healthcare Task Force, created by us on September 8, 2005, and charged with developing recommendations for countywide delivery of health care services including funding for the uninsured, creation of neighborhood medical centers, and education of residents through community outreach regarding access to and the benefits of primary care. Once presented with both plans, we will be able to develop policy that guides this County as it faces the challenge of making healthcare available to all our residents.

13. Senior Citizens' and Children's Programs

The Juvenile Services Department (JSD) continues to provide programs and services targeted to reduce recidivism and to work with Miami-Dade County law enforcement and juvenile justice stakeholders to re-organize and maybe even re-invent the way the community serves at risk juveniles and their families. The programs offered by the department proposed to provide diversion services to over 2,700 juveniles in our community include projects focusing on non-violent felony offenders, first referrals, misdemeanor offenses, substance and domestic abuse, and mental health assistance. I would recommend that funding continue for these programs to ensure juvenile crime is decreased in our community.

The County continues to emphasize services to the elderly, to children and their families, and to special populations with almost 50,000 children benefiting from social services offered through the County. The Community Action Agency (CAA) Head Start Program will provide early learning and development opportunities to over 6,500 children and their families and the Department of Human Resources (DHS) will provide subsidized child care services to over 43,000 children.

Additionally, DHS, in cooperation with the Miami-Dade County Public School System, will provide day treatment and education outside of the school system to severely 175 emotionally disturbed children. The Children Trust, funded from a ½ mill approved by the Board and created in 2002, will spend approximately \$100 million in various children program and the Alliance for Human Services will fund almost \$5 million in programs for children, youth and families.

I am pleased with and support the County Manager's recommendation to continue the County's participation in the Healthy Kids Program. The Public Health Trust (PHT) had provided the funding for the cost of providing health insurance coverage for non-Title XXI enrollees in Miami-Dade through the Florida Healthy Kids Corporation (FHKC) since 1996; however, the Trust voted to discontinue payment for this program in FY2005-06. The Proposed Budget for FY 2006-07 includes \$2.545 million to provide the estimated cost of this program for FY 2005-06 and FY 2006-07. I am equally in support of the Manager's recommendation to provide \$175,000 to the University of Miami to fund medical examinations of allegedly abused, abandoned, or neglected children referred to the Child Protection Team by the abuse hotline.

With the addition of the Senior Advocate this year, the voices of the elderly and their concerns will not go unheard in Miami-Dade County. The Senior Advocate has been tasked with the responsibility of identifying and advocating for those issues that affect them and it is aimed at improving their quality of life. The Senior Advocate is currently developing an interactive website specifically aimed at assisting the elderly access all types of services, from social service programs, to assisted living facilities, to information on types of illness that are most common within the elderly community and where they can go for help. The Senior Advocate is working with all County departments to better coordinate the delivery of elderly services throughout the entire community; in addition, to working with providers to reduce service gaps.

Services for the elderly are equally a priority and the FY 2006-07 Proposed Budget provides funding for almost 1 million meals which will be provided to seniors at senior centers or delivered to those homebound. CAA and DHS will provide opportunities for approximately 1,500 elderly persons to stay active by participating in volunteer programs, almost 500 elderly will have the opportunity to attend day-care, or a senior center, care planning, and the home care program will be provided for over 400 elderly. The Alliance for Human Services will provide over \$3 million to CBOs that offer services to our elders.

I want to keep encouraging my colleagues as to the need to pursue state legislation to offer additional tax relief to our citizens to include the ability to double the senior homestead exemptions and also the ability to freeze the homestead property values for qualifying senior citizens – something that I have been pursuing for over four years. We need to direct the BCC Office of Intergovernmental Affairs to aggressively pursue these legislative priorities in Tallahassee.

The Park and Recreation Department will be working on programming projects that will also benefit the quality of life of our elderly including working with the Senior L.I.F.T. center in the Kendall area, providing capital funding to be used at recreation centers for senior programs, and current programming at six countywide sites. I would like to commend the Manager for enhancing funding for senior programming in FY 2006-07 which will provide and facilitate countywide a variety of fitness and wellness programs in our neighborhoods, including walking clubs, golf and tennis clinics, and water aerobics classes. I encourage our senior residents to participate in the upcoming Miami-Dade Senior Games to be held from November 5-12, 2006 with events to provide them with an incentive to train and compete in Olympic-style sports competition.

In addition to the above services provided to seniors in our community the County continues to provide seniors with property tax savings through the Senior Exemption program started in 2000. This program is responsible for providing seniors with over \$59 million in County-related property tax savings over the last seven years. The following chart shows the number of households that receive the exemption and the average County-related property tax savings for each of these households.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of exemptions</i>	<i>Average County Tax Savings Per Senior Household</i>
2000	31,824	\$264.28
2001	34,743	\$261.47
2002	36,439	\$267.91
2003	38,273	\$267.96
2004	41,883	\$294.88
2005	45,198	\$272.52
2006	45,799	\$271.01

14. Community-based Organizations and Social Services Grants

Since 1990, the Federal Ryan White CARE Act program has provided essential care and treatment funding for persons living with HIV/AIDS and has had significant success in reaching historically underserved populations. Earlier this year, President Bush announced his commitment to the reauthorization of the CARE Act and Miami-Dade County is in agreement with the announcement. I would urge lawmakers to not just reauthorize the CARE Act but to adequately appropriate funding in order to support high quality medical treatment, prescription drugs, and support services that have been demonstrated to keep indigent HIV-infected populations healthy and out of expensive emergency room and/or hospital inpatient care. The County must continue to work through our Ryan White Program staff and the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs to advocate in support of this position.

Community-based organizations (CBOs) are an integral part of our community that further enhance outreach efforts and complement those services provided by Miami-Dade County. However, we must also ensure that CBOs are properly distributing services as directed by the Board of County Commissioners. I am encouraged to see that the Manager has added resources to develop a centralized monitoring and performance evaluation function that will allow for a centralized support of CBOs. It is important that additional staff and technology be provided to ensure the functions success.

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program was enacted, and signed into law as the centerpiece of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 with the primary objective of developing viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low and moderate income.

Miami-Dade County CDBG allocation is used to fund a wide variety of CDBG eligible programs, projects, and activities, including but not limited to, public service programs that address the needs of children, elderly residents, and persons with disabilities; economic development programs that provide assistance to new and existing businesses that create and retain critically needed jobs that principally benefit low and moderate income persons; and affordable rental and homeownership housing projects.

The Miami-Dade County CDBG allocation for FY 2006 is \$18.731 million, a reduction of \$3.679 million (including \$1.4 million earmarked for the City of Miami Gardens) from the FY 2005 entitlement of \$22.410 million, and a reduction of \$4.946 million from the FY 2004 entitlement of \$23.677 million. Therefore, I urge staff to continue working with the Florida Congressional Delegation and the Chair and Members of the Miami-Dade County Legislative Delegation to ensure appropriate funding for the CDBG Program to adequately address local community needs for low and moderate income residents. Economic and community redevelopment is an important issue in every community and I wish to express my sincere appreciation for Commissioner Rolle's efforts as Chair of the Community Empowerment and Economic Revitalization Committee (CEER) in helping establish Miami-Dade County as a viable place for residents to work and businesses to grow.

In addition, Miami-Dade County has been greatly affected by the loss of lives due to crime related activities. One life lost is one too many. It is important that funding be included from crime prevention programs. I am pleased to see that the FY 2006-07 Proposed Budget continues to fund organizations like Citizen's Crime Watch of Miami Dade County, the Victim Services Center, and FCCA Crime Prevention.

15. Infrastructure Needs

1. Water Conservation Programs

The Water and Sewer Department (WASD) retained a consultant to prepare a Reuse and Feasibility Study per the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) guidelines. In May 2006, a draft Study was completed and it was recommended that the department implement a 25% reuse option. This recommendation relies predominantly on urban irrigation and rapid infiltration coupled with a small amount of industrial usage. The recommendation also includes two pilot projects to recharge the Biscayne Aquifer and to rehydrate Coastal Wetlands. WASD anticipates that by May 2007, 90 percent completion of the design portion of these two pilot programs. The department in April 2006 was instructed by the INLUC Committee to submit their draft Feasibility study to FDEP and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). On June 13, WASD received comments from these two agencies and has setup a meeting to resolve the outstanding issues with FDEP, SFWMD and DERM. The department plans to submit a revised Feasibility study to the INLUC Committee in November 2006. The review of the recommendation with the Infrastructure and Land Use Committee will help to assure the long-term viability of the natural systems and the economy of Miami-Dade County. I want to thank Commissioner Seijas for her leadership as the INLUC Chairperson for working diligently to assure that the WASD is attaining their mission and implementing the necessary reforms.

The department was directed by Resolution R-1271-05, under my sponsorship, to develop a long range goal-based water conservation plan. The BCC adopted the plan on April 24, 2006 through Resolution R-468-06.

2. Traffic Signal and Improvements

The damage incurred from hurricanes underscores the importance of quality roadway signage and traffic signals. The Department of Public Works is commencing an illuminated street sign program for 2,000 major arterial road intersections, 430 intersections are programmed to be completed in FY 2006-07 and the remaining 1,479 intersections will be completed by the end of FY 2008-09. To enhance in-house capability to provide new and ongoing traffic signalization services, maintenance and timing and timing teams are being included in the FY 2006-07 Proposed Budget which will ensure consistent and uninterrupted traffic flow while producing an estimated 30 percent savings per intersection over contracting services. I commend the Manager for these savings and encourage the continuation of the program while providing additional analysis on a countywide implementation of illuminated street signs and mast-arm traffic signals.

3. Miami River Dredging Project

In November 2005, the contractor for the Miami River dredging project temporarily demobilized due to lower than anticipated funding allocations from the Federal Government. Looking forward, it is not anticipated that annual federal funding allocations will reach levels sufficient to complete work on the Miami River Project prior to the April 2009 dredging contract expiration. The County is working on the development of a plan by which the \$26 million Army Corps of Engineers funding shortfall could be realized in order to finish this project that is currently 40% complete. It is hoped that the County, and possibly the other non-Federal funding partners (City of Miami, State of Florida, Army Corp of Engineers, and Florida Inland Navigational District), can work together on some viable funding solutions. It is anticipated that a preliminary report on the progress of this plan will be presented to the INLUC in October.

As a supporter of the Miami River dredging project I want to extend my gratitude and heartfelt thanks for Commissioner Barreiro's oversight efforts of the project that is so important to Miami-Dade County.

Last year I highlighted the importance of redeveloping the freed up space at the N.W. 12th Avenue Miami River GSA site and the provision of support offices for the MDPD Marine Patrol unit and the Miami River Commission. I am concerned that as of today very little progress towards re-development has been made. I want to urge the County Manager to follow up and provide a status report in the next 30 days.

4. Blue Roofs Assistance

The Partnership for Recovery (Partnership) estimates the total need for the No More Blue Roofs project in Miami-Dade to be \$30-35 million dollars. The Partnership reports having received approximately \$2.2 million from various sources and additional pledges totaling over \$3.6 million. I would like to commend the Board for awarding \$3 million to the project from Surtax funds. If the Florida Department of Community Affairs approves the County's CDBG Disaster Recovery Initiative grant application request, then an additional amount of approximately \$7 million could go towards the project. I encourage the Manager to continue recovery initiatives and efforts to assist those in our community who were affected and will continue to be.

5. Agricultural Community

Last year's hurricane season devastated the County's agriculture community. It faced losses in the millions not just in crops but also infrastructure. I am encouraged to see that the County Manager through the Agricultural Manager has been aggressively lobbying at the state and federal levels to gain funding for relief programs specifically focused toward the agricultural industry. We must continue our efforts on hurricane preparedness and after storm debris removal. The Agricultural Manager should continue working with the Department of Solid Waste Management in developing a debris removal program particularly addressing illegal dumping which normally takes place after a storm as this was a major issue during last year's season.

16. Recreation and Culture

In the last two years, the Board has supported me in funding the Department of Cultural Affairs (DoCA) for various cultural programs including grant support for neighborhood cultural organizations and major cultural institutions, support for the Cultural Shock tickets for students and the Golden Ticket free cultural admission for seniors, and to create the new capital acquisitions grant program. The FY 2006-07 Proposed Budget includes an additional \$1.5 million as continued support.

As a staunch supporter of the arts in our community and following in the footsteps of my predecessor, I strongly support additional funding for cultural arts programming. Recreational programs and cultural activities impact each and every one of us and the communities we live in and I applaud Commissioner Souto's stance as an avid activist and never-ending support for continued park and recreational programming throughout our community.

The DoCA has assumed a significant, interfacing role with the County's cultural capital projects that are a part of the Building Better Communities (BBC) bond program, assisting with BBC grant contract development, individual project design and development, and functioning as the County's liaison with its 14 non-profit cultural partners. As reported to the Intergovernmental, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Committee, the South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center is proceeding steadily. Unforeseen sub-surface site conditions caused significant remedial measures of \$1.8 million which were covered from the project's contingency fund. The DoCA has developed a plan to use available funds for the Cultural Center to replenish the construction contingency in order to ensure sufficient resources to address any future changes and work as may required. I request the Manager closely monitor this project to ensure fiscal responsibility and completion in a timely manner.

Vizcaya Museum and Gardens has had much staff and financial resource changes over the last two years causing ongoing facility and organization needs, with much invested in hurricane cleanup and preparedness projects. The damages inflicted by Hurricanes Katrina and Wilma, also national decline in historic house museum visitations, has caused a decline in earned income revenue. Vizcaya requires intensive capital improvements to ensure that the facility can continue to provide a world class visiting experience while preserving the presence as a premiere cultural resource in Miami-Dade County. To accomplish these goals, I am requesting the Manager to consider additional funding that will help Vizcaya fill four approved vacant positions and to pursue capital projects including security system upgrades, signage replacement, air conditioning cleaning, and replacement of east terrace drainage. I would certainly support the Manager's allocation of additional funds to ensure that Vizcaya can continue to be an important historical cultural asset to our community.

The Miami-Dade Public Library has opened eight new branches throughout the County in the past five years – all in an effort to better serve our residents and meet the needs of young and old alike. On October 11, 2005, the Library Department opened the California Club Branch Library in District 4 and since then a ground breaking ceremony was held for the International Mall Branch Library in District 12.

On September 6, 2006, I was able to conduct a ground breaking for a facility in District 11. These facilities are expected to bring educational programming to much needed communities. I commend the Manager for the continued support for the library system in our community.

17. Affordable and Workforce Housing

Although the extraordinary tax roll growth has given us the opportunity to address some of the needs of our community and to strengthen our fiscal position throughout the different jurisdictions under our control, it is clear it has created some unintended impacts in our affordable housing sector. When combined with recent findings of mismanagement in our Housing Agency and possible criminal behavior, we must act firmly and immediately to this challenge, and our budget proposal should reflect our commitment to the poorest sector of our population. Affordable and workforce housing touches each and every one of us in many ways and I am grateful for Commissioner Edmonson's and Jordan's persistence and unyielding efforts to make Miami-Dade County an affordable place for everyone to work and live.

For the reasons mentioned above, I am encouraged with the \$15 million worth of enhancements that will be allocated to address immediate affordable housing issues, all supported by the general fund while still offering tax relief to our residents. However, I urge my colleagues to focus on the findings of the Manager's report as well as the Inspector General's report and their recommendations as the Affordable Housing AdHoc Committee meets in order to assure that issues are addressed prudently and expeditiously in the best interest of those in need. It is important that we work with the Mayor, the Manager and our counterparts in the Federal Government to understand the recommendations and quickly implement policy and other changes necessary to address the affordable housing crisis. Again, I would further urge the Manager to explore public/private partnerships and carefully explore other sources of funding that may be available to support these initiatives that could immediately alleviate some of the most affected and displaced as mentioned on page 2 of this message.

18. GSA

I am heartened by the continued improvements at GSA. It is noteworthy that the department eliminated all of the internal subsidy transfers to the Facilities and Utilities Maintenance Division in FY 2006-07. These transfers amounted to \$5.1 million just two years ago. Additionally, with the support of the Office of Strategic Business management, the transfers to subsidize COR (\$1.1 million) and the Administrative Reimbursement (\$400,000) are also abolished in the Proposed Budget. I was thrilled to see the impact of eradicating these transfers reflected in the Proposed Budget in the form of reduced fees. The department will reduce the Lease Contract Management Fee on new and renewed leases from eight to four percent and the Security Contract Management Fee from seven to six percent.

The Fleet Management Services Division is proposing the expansion of operating hours of its maintenance shops, performance of more major repairs in-house and committing to 48 hour turn around for 80 percent of vehicle preventive maintenance inspections. I look forward to seeing the results of these initiatives that aim to reduce vehicle downtime and overall vehicle operating costs.

As someone who is concerned about our environment, I am pleased to see that the department is providing training for its staff to obtain certification in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design and adding the needed support to implement a Sustainable Building and Energy Management Program. The dividends of these initiatives will become evident as we move forward with the construction of facilities funded through the Building Better Communities Bond Program.

I have been watching with much anticipation the continued progress of the Fitness Center construction of the Stephen P. Clark Center lobby. I was pleased to find out that the project is scheduled to open in November of this year, on schedule and on budget, with most of the work having been completed County staff.

Recently, the County purchased a category five building commonly known as Lightspeed. It is anticipated that the facility will be home to the critical functions necessary to keep the government operating during times of emergency resulting from terrorist, environmental or other imminent threat to the people or property of the County. I understand that GSA is in the process of engaging a consultant to create a plan for the use of this facility that maximizes the facilities unique technology and structural components. Once the consultant is onboard, the plan should be completed within 60 to 90 days. I request that GSA report on the progress being made in the development of this facility no later than the end of the second quarter of FY 2006-07.

I want to take this opportunity to commend the GSA staff for a job well done as it lent assistance during the most recent activation of the Board of County Commissioners Command Post and the Emergency Operations Center during tropical storm Ernesto.

19. Procurement

On June 23, 2006, the Procurement Reform Advisory Board (PRAB) completed its review of the County's procurement process and on August 31, 2006, it submitted its recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners.

The PRAB has provided a number of recommendations including changes to the County's Cone of Silence, the Contractor/Vendor Responsibility Legislation, and to assign a high priority to the implementation of a technological solution to modernize the procurement process. In addition, the Department of Procurement Management completed an internal Procurement Process Review, which generated a number of recommendations. As of today, the Department has implemented 52 percent of these recommendations. Once fully implemented, the Procurement Process Review Recommendations will make the procurement process more streamlined, will reduce the procurement cycle time and make it easier for vendors to do business with the County. I strongly feel that Commissioner Sosa's commitment to procurement reform has proven to not only to improve the process but also receive numerous accolades. Therefore, it is not a surprise that the Department has been recognized for its innovation with several awards during the past two years, culminating with the Pareto Award, which recognizes outstanding accomplishments in public procurement and the most prestigious form of peer recognition.

20. Performing Arts Center (PAC)

In the last two years, the construction of the Performing Arts Center has experienced many challenges; but through the efforts of the Board of County Commissioners and the County Manager and the subsequent restructuring of the Management Team, these challenges have been overcome. I would like to commend both the City of Miami and the Miami Dade Police Departments for working together to assure that our citizens and those that will be attending the PAC are safe and able to enjoy this new public venue. Challenges included the shortage of labor as a result of the surge in the South Florida construction market and the unusual weather activity experienced in South Florida. These challenges hindered the project's ability to obtain a sufficient labor force and required the project to prepare for inclement weather that would not have to be done otherwise, affecting the overall construction schedule. In order to overcome these challenges an accelerated plan was implemented and moved the project into a seven day a week operation to meet the August 4, 2006, delivery date.

It gives me great pleasure to announce that we met the scheduled delivery date, and by the end of January 2007 the final punch list of items verifying that the overall aesthetics and quality of work will be delivered as promised. In the interim, a four day Grand Opening Celebration will begin on October 5th utilizing all the public spaces available at the Center. During the inaugural season the Center is budgeted to host over 400 events for an audience of 431,000 as well as numerous private rental events.

21. Quality Neighborhood Improvement Program (QNIP)

The Quality Neighborhood Improvement Program (QNIP) has been one of the success stories of which we can all be proud. Since 1999, the first four phases have funded improvements throughout Miami Dade County's unincorporated area. Over \$170 million has been spent to date on parks, sidewalks, resurfacing, and drainage projects. Staff from the Office of Capital Improvements, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and Environmental Resources Management have worked very hard at responding to each Commissioner's district needs. However, I know that there are still needs out there that need to be addressed. I urge the Manager to present a plan that would provide a QNIP 5 program for Board consideration and immediate adoption and implementation during the FY 2006-07 Budget.

22. Super Bowl XLI

As the host county for Super Bowl XLI, Miami-Dade County has been diligently working in conjunction with the Super Bowl Host Committee, City of Miami, City of Miami Gardens, the Florida Department of Transportation, and the Community Image Advisory Board to ensure the events' success. The Community Image Advisory Board had been coordinating for litter campaigns, right-of-way improvements, green infrastructure, and code enforcement activities. It is estimated that the various events leading to and including the main event on February 4, 2007 will have an economic impact of \$350 million to the Tri-County area. In an effort to ensure its success, Miami-Dade County has committed a cash allocation of \$1.2 million over a three-year funding period ending in FY 2006-07 through Resolution R-565-05. In addition, the County will be providing a total of \$1.082 million in in-kind services from the Miami-Dade Police Department, Fire Rescue, Transit, Consumer Services, Aviation, Vizcaya Museum and Gardens, and Team Metro, as well as executive support through the County Manager's office and the Communications Department. I would also like to thank Commissioner Diaz for his leadership in representing the Board in order to assure that we have a truly successful event and look forward to hosting the Super Bowl again in 2010.

23. BCC Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

The implementation of the BCC Office of Intergovernmental Affairs (OIA) Washington Pilot program and the constant interchange with our Intergovernmental, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Committee, the Board of County Commissioners' Office of Intergovernmental Affairs continues to increase Miami-Dade County presence in

Washington, and has successfully improved direct relations with Congress, the White House, and Federal Agencies. The county's representation at both the state and federal levels is of the utmost importance to this community and I praise Commissioner Heyman's efforts on reforming how we, as a county, evaluate our successes to ensure the County's best interest is always at hand.

During activations at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), it is imperative that miscommunication does not occur. The BCC OIA Director has become the point person for Local, State and Federal communications between elected officials and the BCC Command Post and in turn the EOC. This recent change I believe will ensure good communication and effectively carry out our EOC operations and BCC response during activations.

Furthermore as a component of the BCC OIA, we need to provide funding to help support community efforts for each of the districts during time of emergency activations. As the district representative, Commissioners are approached to assist in the delivery of supplies and services during a crisis. It is important that a dedicated funding source be identified to assist offices offset the cost of providing these supplies and/or services (i.e. vehicles, radios, hurricane preparedness supplies, etc) as soon as the BCC Command Post is activated.

24. Conclusion

I am extremely proud of what the Board has accomplished over the last two years as outlined in my message and I look forward to continue working with you in the best interest of those we serve. I would like to take this opportunity once again to commend the Manager, Jennifer Glazer-Moon, Hugo Salazar, Gus Knoepffler, Chris Rose, Barbara Galvez, Charles Anderson, and their respective staffs as well as my Chief of Staff, Javier I. Marques and my staff for their efforts in presenting this Board with fiscally prudent recommendations and addressing the numerous issues and concerns raised by us throughout this process.

I urge you to support the recommendations that I have outlined above and urge you to adopt the County Manager's Proposed Budget as amended by my Budget Message/Memorandum.

Finally, I encourage you to work with the Manager in trying to address your District needs prior to the second budget hearing scheduled for September 20, 2006. Let's work together to make this final step in our long budget process a very efficient and constructive one. Again, I want to thank all of you for the cooperation and support you have given me during the FY 2006-07 Budget Process.

JM/jim

Cc: Honorable Mayor Carlos Alvarez
Honorable Joseph Farina, Chief Judge
Honorable Katherine Fernandez-Rundle, State Attorney
Honorable Bennett Brummer, Public Defender
Honorable Harvey Ruvlin, Clerk of the Courts
Marvin O'Quinn, President, Public Health Trust
George Burgess, County Manager
Murray Greenberg, County Attorney
Javier I. Marques, MS, Chief of Staff, Office of the Chairman
Charles Anderson, BCC Commission Auditor
Joe Rasco, BCC Office of Intergovernmental Affairs